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RELIGION

Focus on Similarities, Not Differences

Raising My V.O.I.C.E.
 Verbalizing Orderly Impressions through Creative Endeavors
 Selected Writings About People, Places and Things
 by **Jeffery A. Faulkerson**

Author gives advice for prosperity

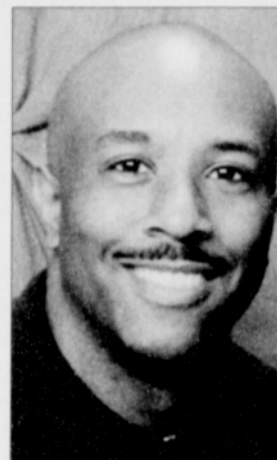
Raising My V.O.I.C.E. is a collection of writings that chronicles a black man's 16-year quest to understand why Americans focus so much on their differences, not enough on their similarities.

The book by Jeffery A. Faulkerson (available at infinitypublishing.com) pulls from the headlines of yesterday and today, offering sound advice to black Americans for how they can pros-

per individually and collectively.

Ultimately, Raising My V.O.I.C.E. is one man using the power of the pen to prompt serious dialogue about functional families, racial reconciliation, civic engagement and collective prosperity. It also serves as a clarion call for contemporary Christians to take firmer stances in their faith.

Faulkerson is the founder, presi-



Jeffery A. Faulkerson

from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

dent and chief executive officer of Practical Solutions, a faith-based social service practice expert in writing, editing and consulting. He has dedicated himself to "promoting functional families through words and deeds."

He earned both his undergraduate and graduate degrees in social work

Special Needs Child Needs Home

Crystal is a beautiful 10-year-old girl who needs adoption. She has medium brown skin, dark eyes and a lovely smile.

Crystal attends a small-town elementary school and receives special education services. She enjoys school and proudly shows off the award she won for self-management skills.

She does well in science and art, and especially enjoys working with clay. She also has a beautiful singing voice. She is a good swimmer and likes to spend time with her foster family camping at the lake.



Crystal, age 10

Crystal is an affectionate girl who wants to please the adults in her life. Ideally, because she will need a good deal of parental time and attention, a family who has foster or adoptive experience but currently no younger children in the home will be the best fit.

Crystal is one of approximately 300 Oregon children available for adoption through

the state, generally because of abuse and neglect.

For more information on the availability of this child, or on how to become a foster or adoptive parent, contact the Special Needs Adoption Coalition at 503-542-2392 or the Oregon Department of Human Services at 1-800-331-0503.

Birth of a King Rehearsals

Participants are invited to open rehearsals for the second community celebration of the "Birth of a King" at Maranatha Church of God, 4222 N.E. 12th Ave.

For more information, call Minister Thomas Hardy at 971-404-5600.

Pet Blessings at Grace Memorial

In honor of St. Francis of Assisi, who among other things is the patron saint of animals, Grace Memorial Episcopal Church, 1535 N.E. 17th Ave., is holding its annual blessing of animals on Sunday, Oct. 7. Services begin at 10 a.m.

Dogs, cats and other pet-sized animals can be taken to the service. The blessings will take place immediately after the service, in the church courtyard, for animals of all shapes and sizes.

For more information, call 287-0418.

Citizens Left Hoping for More

continued ▲ from Metro

lemons. Promising to look into the issue, Potter said, "I've got to have a better idea of the Housing Authority of Portland rationalizes this ... and I have a feeling it has to do with money."

Evans responded that problems would continue until residents were enabled to "build our own and manage it ourselves."

Some saw the issues as a lost cause, at least as far as they concerned Potter, who was perceived

as evasive on topics such as Canda's firing. "It's not even worth bringing up, because he's not going to tell us why he fired him," says David Miller, a gang-prevention worker for northeast Portland.

Miller wasn't the only one feeling halfhearted about the mayor's hour-long visit.

"I got a good feeling from him saying, 'You got a good thing going,'" says Shelly Curry, the coalition's office manager, "but then he was saying that what we

really need to do is get at the next guy who's coming in 15 months."

Potter admitted this limitation while referring to his belief that "groups like this have tremendous power over elections," ironically warning about candidates who evade important topics.

"In a democracy, you folks have the final say," he said, "so invite them in here and don't let them get away with platitudes or good-feeling things, but make them give you the specific answers you want."

Africa Fest to Promote Understanding

continued ▲ from Metro

concerns within the growing number of African refugees and immigrants.

"We are introducing 'Africa-Fest', our first annual community and family harvest celebration, a community and family oriented event organized to make Pan-ACO more visible and to inform the pub-

lic and community about who we are; what we do; raise funds; and have great fun while doing it," Kante said.

The organization, formerly known as the African Community Coalition of Oregon, is a grassroots nonprofit addressing the many needs and issues affecting Africans in Portland.

African immigrant and refugees

are a growing population in the Portland area and make up of some of the most disenfranchised among all immigrants and refugees. Unlike many other immigrants and refugees, African refugees are often illiterate in their native languages thus making literacy and socialization efforts a priority and essential in their ability to acclimate successfully into American culture

and become successful citizens. Saturday's activities will include: a raffle drawing; a chance to win a color TV; a children's dance contest; door prizes; a unique gifts and product auction; and plenty of good music, food, fun, and fellowship.

For more information, call the organization at 503-761-0243 or contact Basko Kante at 503-761-0243.

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Making Education Top Priority

continued ▲ from Metro

Her first priority, however, is to keep the learning process going for herself and her family.

"Since I've been at Portland

State, I've just had a really positive experience," she says. "As the first child on my mom's side to go to college, this is really exciting, and I hope my children will follow in my footsteps."

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